



Working together to keep young people safe

★ Anti-Bullying Week: Nov 16th–20th 2015

The theme of anti-bullying week this year is 'Make a NOISE about bullying'.

Brighton & Hove City Council has a useful guide for parents called 'Safe from Bullying' which is on the council website: www.brighton-hove.gov.uk - follow the links to Children & Education/Schools/Bullying in Schools.

So what is bullying? "Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many 6 forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via social media or the internet) and often involves an imbalance of power."



★ Steps for parents to make a noise about bullying when talking to schools:

If you still feel that the bullying has not been dealt with effectively, write to the school's Chair of Governors. They will aim to help you and the school sort things out.

Agree with the senior member of staff, on how you, your child and the school can work together to deal with the bullying. Set some action points which should be recorded by you or the school in writing.

If the issue has not been resolved within the agreed time or to your satisfaction, make an appointment with a senior member of staff.

Discuss what is happening with the school staff member. The school should agree a plan with you and your child about how to address any conflict between pupils. You may want to write down what has been agreed and set a date to follow-up on what has been done and the results. Expect the school to let you know what has happened.

Report the bullying to the school in line with the policy or following advice from school reception.

1 Read the school anti-bullying policy, available from the school website or school office. Keep a record of what your child is telling you has happened to them and what action the school has taken so far.



★ What Parents can do:

- Monitor social networks and computer use
- Re-inforce the value of good behavior
- Listen and talk to your child about the bullying and give sensible advice
- Follow the steps above, and do talk to someone at school e.g. your child's form tutor or Year office if you are worried



There is a FREE workshop on November 20th for parents of children with disabilities who are concerned about bullying at school. The event will be held at Community Base from 10am – 2pm. For more information, please contact Debbie Gordon - email debbie.gordon@cafamil.org.uk or call 020 7608 8774.



★ Confidence and self-esteem and how to boost it

Self-confidence comes from within...so one really useful thing to do is to learn how to think (and say) something nice about yourself, even though that can feel very difficult.

Self-esteem is how you think about yourself. People with low self-esteem tend to have negative thoughts and a low opinion about themselves and focus on what they see as their faults or weaknesses. Having a low opinion of yourself can make you more prone to mental health problems such as eating disorders, depression or anxiety and phobias.

So what causes young people to have low self-esteem? It can be because of negative experiences in childhood like neglect or abuse or a very negative parenting style where they aren't praised or complimented or never feel they can match up to their parents' expectations. Other things that can lead to low self-esteem include bullying, racism, poor physical health, peer pressure about how to look or behave and feeling isolated or excluded. Having low self-esteem can affect all areas of a person's life from relationships, to work and health, so it is an important thing to work on. Young Minds suggests the following ideas for boosting self-esteem:

★ Understand where your negative thoughts are coming from

In order to change your beliefs, you have to understand your negative beliefs. Think about what your weaknesses are, when you started to feel like this; can you identify something that has happened that might have caused you to feel like this?

★ Challenge them - create an evidence list

Once you have identified the negative beliefs, gather evidence to challenge this and write them down so you have a list as evidence when you are feeling down. For example, if you feel you are unattractive, note it down when you receive a compliment from someone that says you look pretty or they like your new haircut.

★ Start thinking positively

Positive thinking exercises – write down the things you like about yourself. Think about your best feature and



write it down – I like my eyes, for example. Think about things you have achieved and add them to the list. Think about nice things you have done for other people, skills you have, talents that you or others have noticed and write all these positive things down. This is good to look back on when you are having a bad day or when you are nervous about something such as an exam.

★ Spend time with people who make you feel good

Look at the people you have around you on a regular basis and think about how they make you feel. If you are spending a lot of time with someone who makes you feel rubbish about yourself then spend a bit less time with them and spend more time with people who make you feel good about yourself.

★ Nurture a hobby

Take up a positive hobby. Whether you're drawn to active pastimes like climbing or creative ones like painting, spending time doing something you enjoy and improving your skills at it will boost your self-confidence.

★ Set yourself goals

Set yourself an aim – maybe a sponsored walk for charity which will make you feel good about yourself, or a list of books you'd like to read by the end of the year.

★ Remember these sayings:

"Success is 99% failure."

"If you think you can you can, if you think you cant you cant."

"It its to be- its up to me!"

★ **Run for Safety Net!** Are you up for a challenge? We have places in the 2016 Marathon, Half Marathon and the Brighton Marathon 10k run and would love to have you as part of Team Safety Net! For more information, details or to book a place, please email events@safety-net.org.uk, telephone 01273 411 613 or visit www.safety-net.org.uk/supportus/fundraising-events.



★ Safety issues this term



Bonfire night can be a tempting time for young people who are fascinated with fire. But without help fire setting behaviour can get worse and lead to more serious consequences.

Watch out for these tell-tale signs of fire setting behaviour:

- ★ Matches or lighters hidden in bedrooms, school bags or coats
- ★ An unusual fascination with fire
- ★ Small burn holes on carpets, bedding and furniture
- ★ Scorch marks in hidden locations such as in wardrobes or cupboards
- ★ Burnt paper or objects in bins or burnt matches lying around
- ★ Noticing the smell of burning
- ★ Unexplained fires in the home or garden
- ★ Noticing injuries to skin, e.g. burns

We can reduce the chances of young people starting fires by understanding and challenging their behaviour and giving them some basic fire safety advice. It is also worth considering your own actions and how they might influence the behaviour of the children you are responsible for.

- ★ don't leave matches or lighters lying around the home
- ★ make sure you have a working smoke alarm on each floor and in children's bedrooms
- ★ don't allow rubbish to pile up and if you have an open fire make sure it has a fire guard

East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service runs a scheme called Firewise which aims to reduce the likelihood of young people setting fires by educating them about the dangers and impacts of fire, enabling them to make safer choices. For more information about the Firewise scheme or to make a referral, please contact tel: 0303 9991009 or email firewise@esfrs.org or visit www.esfrs.org/firewise



East Sussex
Fire & Rescue Service

★ **We would love to hear from you!** Let us know if you are finding this newsletter helpful, suggest a safety topic for us to cover, or make a comment. Please like Safety Net on Facebook, or email us at newsletter@safety-net.org.uk. For an online edition, go to our website: www.safety-net.org.uk

★ How I stay confident in school

When I started in Year 7 last year, I felt petrified because I was moving from a tiny safe primary school into an unknown huge secondary school. None of my friends were going which made the whole transition worse. This has now completely changed.

Moving into year 8 I felt excited to be going back. I was looking forward to seeing all the new friends I had made throughout the year. They make me more confident. They have given me ideas and tips to help me stay confident. For example, when I was worried about getting lost in the school or being late for lessons, my friends suggested writing the room numbers on the back of my hand. I still do this now sometimes so I am confident that I go to the right room at the right time.

Sometimes I get anxious before school. I don't like being late, forgetting anything important or not doing my homework. Being organised helps me stay confident. I know what bus to get in the morning so I am not late and I ensure I am in the correct uniform so I don't get into trouble.

Secondary school has given me opportunities to try new things. Last year I decided to sing in The Voices concert at the dome and this has given me the confidence to join the School Choir now I'm in year 8. Trying things out gives you the confidence to try even more new things.

I enjoy school and generally I feel confident around school. I feel most confident in lessons that I am good at. I become good at lessons by listening and working hard. My friendship groups and teachers encourage me to work hard and join in, and this in turn makes me feel part of the school and belong in the school. This is how I stay confident in school.

By Josie, Age 12



★ How safe are our children?

The first in a series of interviews, this term with Graham Bartlett, the independent chair of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board*. This edition's focus is on **neglect**.



Graham Bartlett

Q: Why should we be worried about neglect? A: Although we hear more in the news about children who are harmed because of physical or sexual abuse, neglect is actually one of the most common reasons for a child to be put on a child protection plan or register in the UK, with 1 in 10 children estimated to have experienced neglect. It is a priority of the LSCB to improve how we tackle this as a city and was a key point in the NSPCC's 2015 report "How Safe are Our Children".

Q: So what is neglect? A: It's the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs; this could include physical neglect, where a child is left hungry or dirty, or without adequate clothing, shelter, supervision, or health care. It also includes emotional neglect where a child is regularly ignored or humiliated, isolated or not shown love. A child may be put in danger or not protected from physical or emotional harm.

Q: So what effect does neglect have on a child as they grow up? A: The effects of neglect can be really severe, with children not developing emotionally and physically as they should. Neglect during infancy and early childhood has been shown to negatively affect early brain development leading to problems into adolescence and adulthood which can include: poor physical and mental health and often low self-esteem, with children not doing well in school, perhaps getting involved in anti-social behaviour and being less likely to form healthy relationships and lead a fulfilling life. Neglected children can also become more vulnerable to child sexual exploitation, radicalisation and criminal activity.

Q: How would someone know if a child was being neglected? What sort of signs could they look out for?

A: You might notice a child or young person is...

- ★ Frequently absent from school;
- ★ Begging or stealing money or food and they may be constantly underweight;
- ★ Not getting medical or dental care when they need it, or immunisations or glasses;



- ★ Not dressed appropriately e.g. for weather conditions, or is wearing clothes that are consistently dirty or smelly;
- ★ Not well cared for, their teeth and hair are dirty, they may have hair infestations;
- ★ Slow to develop language and motor skills;
- ★ Passive and unable to be spontaneous;
- ★ Over-friendly with strangers;
- ★ Isolated and gets on badly with other children of the same age;
- ★ Rejected by their family, treated differently or not protected from physical harm or danger.

Q: So is neglect just about bad parenting?

A: No, neglect can often become an issue when parents are dealing with complex and difficult problems, sometimes including domestic abuse, substance misuse, mental health issues, or they may have been poorly looked after themselves. These problems can have a direct impact on parents' ability to meet their child's needs and they need help and support themselves.

Q: What can someone do if they are worried that a child is being neglected? A: If you are concerned that a child you know is being neglected talk to a professional who can help them get the support they need, such as a teacher at your child's school. Alternatively you can contact the MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) on 01273 292379.

**The Local Safeguarding Children Board has responsibility for making sure that arrangements are in place in Brighton and Hove to make sure that children and young people are protected from harm and abuse.*



Working with communities to keep children safe

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